meet at Ferrol, and by the middle of July the English admiralty was fully informed as to the whereabouts and plans of the French fleet. On the sixteenth of that month the Emperor issued orders for Villeneuve to unite the Spanish vessels with his own, and then to reinforce himself with the French squadrons of Rochefort and Brest, and appear in the Channel. On July twenty-second a British fleet under Calder met Villeneuve off Cape Finisterre in a dense fog, but the latter was not checked in his passage to Vigo. By August second he found himself at the head of a Franco-Spanish fleet numbering no fewer than twenty-nine ships of the line, which were assembled in the harbors of Ferrol and Corunna. He complained, however, that he had "bad masts, bad sails, bad rigging, bad officers, bad sailors." Conceiving himself in all probability to be only the tool of a feint, he lost the little enthusiasm he had, and became sullen. Nelson had joined Admiral Cornwallis before Brest, and, leaving his best eight ships to strengthen both the guard and the blockading fleets, made for Portsmouth. Calder, too, had reinforced the blockaders, so that by August seventeenth there would be eighteen vessels before Ferrol; eighteen remained before Brest, while a third squadron, under Sterling, was cruising with five more, prepared to join either. Villeneuve was not ready for sea until the thirteenth. Were his orders, in view of the changed situation, still valid? After an effort to beat northward against a violent storm, the French admiral received false news from a Danish merchant vessel that an English fleet of twenty-five sail was approaching. He thought himself in the exercise of due discretion when he turned and made for Cadiz, especially as the Emperor's orders contained a clause authorizing him, in case of unforeseen casualties which materially altered the situation,